enterprises. REGP is implemented in rural areas and small town with population below 20,000 while PMRY is implemented in both rural and urban areas.

The schemes relating to khadi are implemented in Andhra Pradesh through 78 khadi institutions. Khadi is mainly an agro-based activity.

Through the Coir Board, the Government implements a number of schemes for development of the coir industry, in coconut growing States, including Andhra Pradesh.

Use of communication facilities of private companies in Government offices

†1339. SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD:
DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have given permission to all Government departments to utilize the communication facilities of private sector companies at their will;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether it is a fact that Government companies will face economic pressure as a result thereof; and

(d) if so, what is the estimated annual loss of these companies?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. SHAKEEL AHMAD): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Ministry of Finance issued instructions on 23.11.2005 on Economic measures which *inter-alia* allow the Ministries/Departments to avail telecom services of providers other than the Public Sector Undertakings (PSUs), provided the criteria for selecting the alternative service provider are based on better and more competitive rates being offered by the latter.

(c) and (d) Government companies can meet the challenge of competition by offering competitive rates. Large scale migration of telephone connections from PSUs to private companies is not expected and, therefore, reduction in revenues of these companies cannot be assessed.

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.